

THE STATE BAR OF CALIFORNIA

A TRIBUTE TO PRO BONO 2007

PRESIDENT'S PRO BONO SERVICE AWARDS



HONORABLE RONALD M. GEORGE

Chief Justice of California

I feel very honored to participate once again in honoring the recipients of the President's Pro Bono Service Awards and the Loren Miller Legal Services Award. We are celebrating individuals whose work puts substance into the phrase "and justice for all" and sustains our vision of the law as a profession and not simply a business.

Every day, individuals find themselves unable to pay for the services of an attorney and incapable, even with self-help assistance, of handling their legal problems effectively. The subject may be crucial issues such as child custody or support, an adoption, an eviction or foreclosure notice, a threat of deportation, the loss of crucial public benefits, or the myriad challenges affecting the homeless. Direct guidance provided by a self-help center suffices for some. But for many others, these centers essentially assist in identifying those individuals who urgently need counsel because their cases are complex or technical, or they lack adequate facility in the English language and familiarity with the American system.

Dedicated legal aid providers serve a vast number of these individuals, but there simply are not enough of these providers to meet present needs. Without the pro bono assistance contributed by practitioners in every type of practice and from every part of our state, more and more individuals effectively would be shut out of the courthouse.

The lawyers we honor today demonstrate the many ways that lawyers can use their skills to assist those less fortunate. Not only do these individuals provide invaluable services to their clients, they strengthen the rule of law — and they help return the focus of the practice of law to making justice a reality for all individuals from every background.

On behalf of the entire California court system, I thank each of these award winners, and encourage each of you to do the same. I hope that these individuals will inspire you, as they have me, to undertake further efforts to ensure the fair and accessible administration of justice for all.



SHELDON H. SLOAN

President, The State Bar of California, 2006-2007

On behalf of the State Bar of California, I am privileged to congratulate the recipients of the 2007 President's Pro Bono Service Awards, the Loren Miller Legal Services Award and the Jack Berman Award for Achievement for Distinguished Services to the Profession and Public. These awardees have compassionately and generously volunteered hundreds of hours of hard work to help those most in need of legal services.

A daunting 67% of the legal needs of California's poor continue to go unmet and even for the one third of the legal need that is being addressed, it is often through brief services and advice. The lawyers recognized here come from a variety of backgrounds and practice settings whose outstanding commitment to addressing the reality of the legal needs of California's poor unite them as champions in our profession's commitment to ensure a fair and accessible justice system.

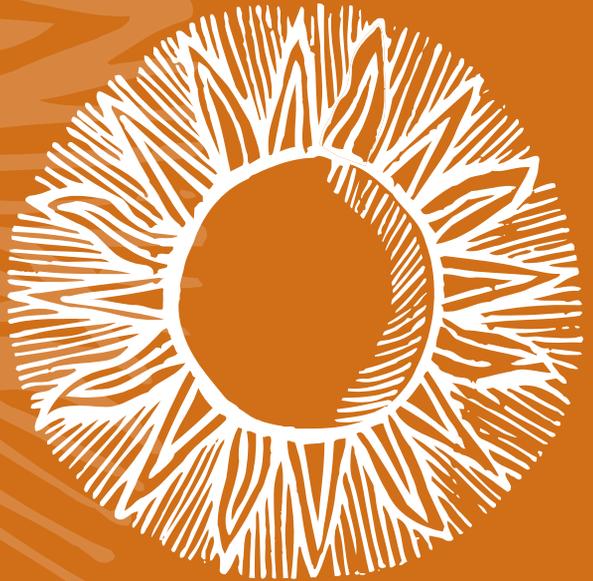
On behalf of the entire State Bar, thank you for setting an example in the profession for us all, and for reminding us that 100% justice means meeting the needs of 100% of Californians.

PRESIDENT'S PRO BONO SERVICE AWARDS

The State Bar Board of Governors created the President's Pro Bono Service Awards in 1983 to provide statewide recognition of attorneys for outstanding provision of pro bono legal services to the poor. In 2001, the awards categories were reconfigured to fully ensure that attorneys from a variety of practice settings be recognized for their extraordinary provision of pro bono legal services to low income persons or organizations whose primary purpose is to serve the poor.

The following factors are taken into consideration in the selection process:

- Breadth and impact of nominee's pro bono work
- Nominee's practice setting
- Nature of pro bono program through which the work is done
- Evidence of nominee's commitment to pro bono work
- Nature of services contributed



2007 AWARD RECIPIENTS

Government	DarAnn L. Dearing
Small Law Firm	Minyard & Morris LLP
Medium Law Firm	Donahue Gallagher Woods LLP
Large Law Firm	Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP
Recently Admitted	Carlo A. Pedrioli
Solo Practitioner	Kate Neiswender
Distinguished Pro Bono Service	Heller Ehrman LLP Litigation Team



GOVERNMENT

DarAnn L. Dearing,
Fillmore

DarAnn Dearing has been a fearless volunteer with Santa Clara Valley Legal Aid (an organization staffed 100% by volunteers) for the past nine years. Her two-decade career in Ventura County's child protective services agency has helped countless at-risk families and children from falling into the child welfare system. Because of her job in the "trenches", she has access to many agencies and partners and brings this breadth of connections to legal aid — providing a holistic approach to assisting families. On top of her 55-hour work-week, she commutes 45-minutes each way every week to provide much needed legal services in the areas of domestic violence, landlord-tenant and consumer law to Santa Clara's rural farm workers, working families and victims of domestic violence. She also serves as an invaluable resource for the legal aid's other volunteer attorneys with her insight and working knowledge of the county system. In her "spare" time, she is an advocate and fundraiser for adult literacy.

Nominated by Santa Clara Valley Legal Aid

SMALL LAW FIRM

Minyard & Morris LLP, Newport Beach

The 15-attorney family law practice firm of Minyard & Morris is a large pro bono leader in a small world of family law practitioners in Orange County. In 2006, almost every associate in the firm provided legal services to Public Law Center's (PLC) family law clients — predominately women with minor children, most of them victims of domestic violence and/or monolingual Spanish and Vietnamese speakers. The firm contributed hundreds of hours of pro bono service in over 30 family law matters, handling complex and time consuming legal issues that other volunteer attorneys, let alone an entire firm, would not easily commit to. Noting that their firm alone



Minyard & Morris LLP

Back row, left to right:

Tom Tuttle, John Denny, Michael Morris, Mark Minyard, Lonnie Seide, Jim Parke, Mike Turek

Front row, left to right:

Steve Hittelman, Michelle Ralph, Jan Morimoto-Gee, Rachel Haas, Ron Funk

could not meet the needs of all of PLC's clients, Minyard & Morris stepped up to the plate and partnered with PLC to provide basic family law trainings and mentorship to attorneys new to this practice area. The firm's substantial expertise and concrete commitment allowed Public Law Center to offer a support network to attorneys interested in providing pro bono representation to low-income unrepresented family law litigants.

Nominated by Public Law Center



Steve Lee

MEDIUM LAW FIRM

Donahue Gallagher Woods LLP, Oakland

Donahue Gallagher Woods, a medium-sized diversified civil practice firm, was the first firm in Alameda County to sign up to receive cases from the Alameda County

Bar Association Volunteer Legal Services Corporation (VLSC) over twenty years ago. In 2006, firm attorneys contributed hundreds of hours of pro bono service through referrals from VLSC in the areas of debt collection defense, immigration, and assistance to non-profit organizations. They are the only Alameda County firm that accepts immigration law cases from VLSC. The firm's attorneys also coordinate VLSC's monthly Debt Collection

Defense Clinic and Immigration Clinic where 85% of clients are non-English speaking. Firm attorneys prepare and update free VLSC training materials and regularly serve as mentors and trainers to other VLSC volunteer attorneys. Donahue Gallagher also counsels pro bono clients with AIDS and ARC in will and estate, insurance, and government benefits matters, staffs a monthly labor law clinic, and provides pro bono services to several legal services and community-based charitable organizations. Firm attorneys receive full billable hour credit for all approved pro bono work with no cap imposed.

Nominated by Alameda County Bar Association, Volunteer Legal Services Corporation

LARGE LAW FIRM

Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP, (Statewide)

In 2006, Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher's (GDC) four California offices donated more than 37,000 hours of pro bono service on several hundred pro bono matters to a variety of individuals, organizations and causes statewide — an 85% increase in the firm's overall 2005 pro bono hours. Gibson Dunn's commitment to pro bono is evidenced through its nomination from 6 co-nominators and the breadth of contributions:

The Los Angeles office has been a leader in facilitating the adoption of hundreds of children a year initiating the Adoption Saturday Program (now know as National Adoption Day) with The Alliance for Children's Rights and Public Counsel. Through their participation and leadership, Gibson Dunn volunteers finalized adoptions for more than 2,000 children in foster care. They also successfully co-counseled with the Alliance for Children's Rights and Public Counsel on a class action filed on behalf of hundreds of adoptive families in Los Angeles County seeking relief on behalf of children with developmental



Left to right: John Sharer and Mack Jenkins

disabilities. In addition, in 2006 GDC transactional attorneys undertook new matters with Public Counsel's Community Development Project in the areas of transactional law, real estate, non-profit incorporation, contracts and intellectual property to support non-profit and micro-business client organizations serving low-income communities in LA County. Gibson Dunn was the first firm committed to Bet Tzedek Legal Service's Hungarian Reparations Clinic Project assisting Holocaust survivors/descendants to apply to the Hungarian government for survivors' benefits (approximately 150 clients weekly). GDC is also a key partner with Bet Tzedek Legal Services in providing power of attorney for health care documents for seniors as well as a key partner in the new development of a "Receivership Project" — a joint effort between Bet Tzedek, the LA Housing Department and the City Attorney's office to convert slum housing into safe and affordable housing.

The Orange County office of Gibson Dunn has been a staunch supporter of the Public Law Center and accepted cases involving housing/homeownership, a consumer case involving seniors, an immigration/political asylum case and assistance with transactional matters for non-profits. One of the major cases was an affirmative habitability class action lawsuit on behalf of a

group of low-income Hispanic tenants living in substandard housing in Santa Ana. GDC often takes on cases outside of their usual sphere of practice involving immigration, family law and eviction defense often for monolingual Spanish and Vietnamese speakers.

The Palo Alto and San Francisco offices of GDC are actively involved with the Bar Association of San Francisco's Volunteer Legal Services Program (VLSP) handling pro bono SSI



Left to right: Nick Hanna, Lise Johnson, Christopher Campbell
Not pictured: Kelly Leggio and Kevin Roosevelt



Left to right: Tim Roake, Ernie Hsin, Mindy McCrory, Nathan Chase Jr., Marcie Morrow, Sally Berens, Ray Yee, Paul Collins

and landlord/tenant issues matters for the homeless through VLSP's Homeless Advocacy Project (HAP) Summer Associate Program. GDC also commits to VLSP's Courthouse Landlord/Tenant Project "Attorney of the Day" by providing limited scope representation to pro per litigants facing eviction. Gibson Dunn also provided a full range of transactional services to 13 Northern California non-profits, including 5 new ones in 2006. A team of Gibson Dunn San Francisco attorneys committed hundreds of hours on a successful asylum case for a Kenyan woman and her children.

Nominated by The Alliance for Children's Rights, Bar Association of San Francisco Volunteer Legal Services Program, Bet Tzedek Legal Services, Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County, Public Counsel, and Public Law Center

RECENTLY ADMITTED

Carlo A. Pedrioli, Modesto

As a recently admitted attorney, Carlo Pedrioli made an unsolicited call to California Rural Legal Assistance's (CRLA) Modesto office to volunteer in early 2006. Since then, he has



Carlo A. Pedrioli

been a regular presence in the small rural bureau and has contributed hundreds of hours of service that

have involved counsel and advice, direct representation, participation in impact litigation, co-counseling with regular CRLA staff attorneys, helping self-represented litigants prepare their own cases, and taking on litigation cases in emergency situations. Many of his clients have been low-income seniors and disabled clients who have been targeted victims of fraud and unfair housing practices. Mr. Pedrioli also provided research and writing for complicated administrative and court matters. For example, he made contributions to an important impact case in which the plaintiff sought to evict a farm worker client from subsidized housing where the client and his family had lived for more than 15 years. Mr. Pedrioli's research and memos that tackled complicated arguments over statutory history and the meaning and application of intricate federal regulations provided priceless support for the CRLA attorney of record on the case. CRLA hired Mr. Pedrioli as a regular staff attorney in May 2007.

Nominated by California Rural Legal Assistance

SOLO PRACTITIONER

Kate Neiswender, Ventura

Kate Neiswender is a solo practitioner in Ventura County with a real estate, environmental and land use practice. In 2005 Kate accepted



Kate Neiswender

a predatory lending case from Ventura County Bar Association's Volunteer Legal Services Program (VLSP). It turned out to be far more complicated than had been originally anticipated and the predatory lenders far more persistent. Ms.

Neiswender sought and successfully obtained a court order to prevent foreclosure on her clients' home and since then the case has continued for almost three years — involving extensive discovery, several summary judgment motions,

and multiple bankruptcy filings by several of the defendants, among other thorny delaying tactics. Refusing to abandon her clients and "return" the extensive case to VLSP, Ms. Neiswender rallied on and spent numerous hours in 2006 litigating the case on behalf of Spanish speaking victims and successfully obtained for them the return of their home and the elimination of almost two hundred thousand dollars in sham liens. Given that Ms. Neiswender's law practice does not deal with lending issues, she undertook considerable research in a new and exceedingly complex area of law to successfully save the home of this family of three. But her efforts were more far reaching. As a result of her work, others who had been affected by the same predatory lending scheme were identified and the District Attorneys in three counties were alerted and are now watching for these types of schemes. Ms. Neiswender is also an advocate for animal rights and environmental matters.

Nominated by Ventura County Superior Court Self-Help Legal Access Center and Ventura County Bar Association Volunteer Legal Services Program

DISTINGUISHED PRO BONO SERVICE

Heller Ehrman LLP Litigation Team, Menlo Park

In 2006 the pro bono litigation team from the Menlo Park office of Heller Ehrman LLP secured a major victory in a class action lawsuit, *Kincaid et al. v. City of Fresno*, on behalf of homeless people in Fresno, stopping the City of Fresno's practice of seizing and immediately destroying the personal possessions of homeless individuals. Working with the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area (LCCR) and the American Civil Liberties Union of Northern California (ACLU), the small team led by Paul Alexander, managing shareholder of the Silicon Valley based office, contributed thousands of attorney and paralegal hours to successfully help the homeless. Throughout the case, the team made frequent long-distance trips from Menlo Park to Fresno's dusty abandoned stretch of land by the railroad tracks to



Heller Ehrman LLP Litigation Team

Left to right: Eric Trostad, Melyssa Minamoto, Paul Alexander

investigate where the homeless raids had taken place and actively meet with clients (often in their tents and shelters). Their "roll up the sleeves" attitude to treat the litigation as seriously as any other complex and significant piece of litigation for a major client eventually resulted in a preliminary injunction to protect homeless people's rights, finding that the city's "dishonest" policies clearly violated the 4th and 14th Amendments. The class action lawsuit is on going but if the permanent relief sought is granted, hundreds of homeless people in Fresno and other jurisdictions will benefit for years to come. The work of the Heller Ehrman Litigation Team also put legal pressure on the City of Fresno, resulting in a new dialogue between elected officials, homeless advocates, and the homeless themselves. Joanna, a plaintiff, had this to say about the Heller team: "They have treated me, a homeless woman, with respect and they have given me hope. Paul has been a voice for the homeless and the poor and has let others know that we are people too."

Nominated by the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area and the American Civil Liberties Union of Northern California

PRO BONO CALIFORNIA 2007

CALIFORNIA ATTORNEYS MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Whether newly admitted, retired (see Emeritus Attorney Program below), practicing in a government, corporate, academic setting or as a solo, you can definitely make a significant difference in the lives of those who would not otherwise have access to the legal system. For more information about pro bono opportunities in your community, contact your local bar association or the State Bar of California Office of Legal Services, Access and Fairness Programs, Program Development Unit at 415.538.2219, 415.538.2267 or programdevelopment@calbar.ca.gov.

EMERITUS ATTORNEY PRO BONO PROGRAM

If you are an attorney who is otherwise “retired” from the active practice of law, in a transition period or are taking a sabbatical from the business of a law practice, please consider making a difference by doing pro bono work by enrolling in the State Bar’s Emeritus Attorney Pro Bono Program. The Emeritus Attorney Program waives the active status membership fee for eligible attorneys who do pro bono work exclusively with a Qualified Legal Services Program or a State Bar certified lawyer referral service (no fee panel). The nature and scope of the pro bono work varies with each program or LRS. For more information about the Emeritus Attorney Program, contact Rodney Low at 415.538.2219 or rodney.low@calbar.ca.gov. Information about the EA Program and a downloadable application and sworn statement form can be found on the State Bar’s website at <http://calbar.ca.gov/calbar/pdfs/comcom/Emeritus-App.pdf>

STATE BAR’S COMMITMENT TO PRO BONO

Originally adopted by the Board of Governors in December 1989, the State Bar’s Pro Bono Resolution encourages all attorneys to contribute at least 50 hours per year of pro bono service, “...to provide or enable the direct delivery of legal services, without expectation of compensation other than reimbursement of expenses, to indigent individuals, or to not-for-profit organizations with a primary purpose of providing services to the poor or on behalf of the poor or disadvantaged, not-for-profit organizations with a purpose of improving the law and the legal system, or increasing access to justice.”

In June 2002, the Resolution was amended to reflect an updated and renewed commitment to serving the legal needs of low- and moderate-income Californians today, including adding an option to support pro bono through financial contributions. The Resolution in its entirety can be found on the State Bar’s website at <http://calbar.ca.gov/calbar/pdfs/accessjustice/2003-Pro-Bono-Res.pdf>

SAVE THE DATE! JUNE 5-7, 2008
Pathways to Justice Conference
Los Angeles Marriott Downtown
*Sponsored by the State Bar of California and
Legal Aid Association of California*

STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE DELIVERY OF LEGAL SERVICES (SCDLS)

SCDLS is a 20-member advisory committee appointed by the State Bar Board of Governors that identifies, develops and supports improvements in the delivery of legal services to low- and moderate-income Californians such as implementing statewide activities that encourage and promote pro bono participation. For more information about SCDLS, contact Staff Liaison Sharon Ngim at sharon.ngim@calbar.ca.gov or 415.538.2267.

OFFICE OF LEGAL SERVICES, ACCESS & FAIRNESS PROGRAMS

Program Development Unit

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The mission of the Program Development Unit is to develop and support efforts on a statewide basis that enhance and improve the delivery of legal services to low- and moderate-income Californians.



The State Bar of California | Office of Legal Services,
Access & Fairness Programs

The State Bar of California

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